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ABSTRACT

After preliminary problem identification, mailed questionnaires were sent in April 1981 to citizens (2,000 households) and 735 public officials in eastern Washington to identify and assign priority to five or more rural issues common to the Partnership for Rural Improvement (PRI) geographic region for purposes of forming regional task forces. Public officials returned 72% of their questionnaires, citizens 40%, and PRI participants turned in 65%. Of the 11 predetermined major issue areas, prevention and control of rural crime ranked first, not enough money to provide needed local government services ranked second, and effectiveness of local government ranked third. Other areas and their rankings included community decline (4th), adequacy of management and protection of natural resources (5th), adequacy of recreational opportunities (6th), adequacy of health and medical services (7th), rapid community growth (8th), adequacy of services for senior citizens (9th), adequacy of educational opportunities for adults (10th), and adequacy of cultural opportunities (11th). The study group recommended that a task force investigate and suggest methods to help local government deal with declining revenues, and that a task force be formed to investigate the extent and nature of rural crime in eastern Washington and, if needed, recommend means of responding to identified problems. (BRR)

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PRIORITIES FOR RURAL IMPROVEMENT

Report of a Partnership for Rural Improvement
Sponsored Needs Assessment Study Group

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July 1981

RC 013502

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CONTENTS

SECTION		PAGE
I	Charge to the Needs Assessment Study Group from the RCC.	1
II	Procedures for Arriving at Recommendations.	1
III	Selection of Criteria for Potential Task Force Topics.	2
IV	Review of Prior Studies	4
V	Preliminary Issue and Problem Identification	5
VI	Feedback on Preliminary Problem Identification	6
VII	Survey Design and Implementation	7
	- Survey Rationale	
	- Questionnaire	
	- Sample	
	- Implementation	
	- Response Rates	
VIII	Survey Results	12
IX	Recommendations	26
X	Appendices	
	A) Prior Studies Report	34
	B) Questionnaire and Cover Letters	35
	C) Map of PRI Region and Subregions	44

PRIORITIES FOR RURAL IMPROVEMENT

Section I CHARGE TO THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY GROUP FROM THE RCC

The Needs Assessment Study Group was established by the PRI Regional Coordinating Committee for a specific purpose: identify and assign priority to five or more rural issues common to the PRI geographic region for purposes of forming regional task forces as called for in the PRI plan of work. A report including procedures used in arriving at our recommendations was to be presented to the Regional Coordinating Committee for use in deciding issues and problems task forces would be formed to address. This report is submitted for that purpose.

The Study Group was comprised of individuals with varying backgrounds and responsibilities. It included a regional planner, a home economist, economist, political scientists and sociologists employed in a variety of positions. Their work responsibilities include university instruction, research and/or administration, county planning, and extension field supervision. The details of how the group was to arrive at its recommendations were left up to the group to work out. It was hoped that the recommendations would be based upon considerable interaction and a variety of assessment procedures.

Section II PROCEDURES FOR ARRIVING AT RECOMMENDATIONS

An evolutionary approach to the Study Group task was followed. Our first meeting was used to gain agreement on a general, but tentative, approach. This approach included the development of criteria for problem selection (see Section III) and reviewing relevant past efforts to iden-

tify issues facing eastern Washington communities (see Section IV and Appendix A).

The Study Group sought to expand the basis for making recommendations to the Regional Coordinating Committee by individually compiling and collectively discussing possible task force topics. In these discussions, our individual backgrounds and experiences as well as considerable interaction with various colleagues was utilized (see Section V for details).

In our second meeting, a tentative formulation of alternative task force topics and the directions the task force on that topic might take were formulated for distribution to the PRI partners to gather specific feedback. Following this effort, a lengthy December meeting was held to discuss the available information and attempt to arrive at task force recommendations. It was decided at this time to obtain additional feedback on precise topic areas from the general public and local officials in the PRI area. This led to the development of a survey which was implemented in early spring 1981. This report outlines the specific steps followed in arriving at our recommendations, results from the survey, and recommendations for task force topics.

Section III SELECTION OF CRITERIA FOR POTENTIAL TASK FORCE TOPICS

In the initial stages of its work the Needs Assessment Study Group undertook to formulate some guidelines as to the appropriate range of issues and problems which might be of proper concern to the PRI task forces currently being planned. From the outset it was quite clear that a vast range of problems and issues were under consideration or being

acted upon by citizen groups, governmental agencies, or university researchers. In order to progress with some sense of appropriate focus, it was therefore necessary to formulate a set of CRITERIA FOR SELECTION to distinguish those topics which had particular relevance to the PRI task force enterprise from all of those topics which were--for one good reason or another--inappropriate to our purposes.

Upon due reflection and ample debate, the Needs Assessment Study Group came to a consensus upon the following set of criteria for the selection of potential task force topics:

1. The issue in question must be COMMON TO THE PRI REGION

   - Commonality is represented by either of two conditions: a) the issue is one which pertains to all 15 counties as a regional problem; or b) the issue is one which many (if not all) communities in the region share

2. The issue should be of INTEREST AND CONCERN to a large number of people in the region.

   - Many issues of common application are, nevertheless, of slight concern to the general public. This criterion was added to insure that the efforts of the PRI task force groups would be of interest to a wide audience, and that their ultimate product would be something more than another "academic study" or "government report."

3. The topic should be RELEVANT TO RURAL IMPROVEMENT.

   - Many potential issues could be common to the region and of wide concern, but could nevertheless be of slight concern to those interested in rural improvement. For example, the question of relations with the U.S.S.R. and their relationship to our local economy would likely fit the first two criteria, but it would hardly be an issue which would produce information useful to local persons interested in rural development.

4. The topic should be MANAGEABLE within the context of a six-month study period.

   - Many potential issues would satisfy the first three criteria, but would involve far more detailed and

in-depth study than would be possible in the period of six months.

5. The FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS should have a reasonable chance to IMPACT the region and have a HIGH POTENTIAL FOR IMPLEMENTATION.

   - Many potential topics would satisfy the first four criteria, but would be unlikely to produce results which--if studied in the context of a six-month task force--would be likely to lead to effective implementation of improvements.

Section IV REVIEW OF PRIOR STUDIES

A critical task facing the Needs Assessment Study Group involved the development of an awareness of problems facing eastern Washington communities and a working familiarity with the criteria to be used for problem identification. This task was accomplished via a review of prior "needs" studies and reports (see Appendix A for a brief annotated bibliography) as well as consultation with one or more individuals in a variety of responsibilities and disciplines. These individuals were linked to such organizations as:

*Association of Washington Cities-General local government
*Association of Washington Counties-General local government
*Eastern Washington Area Agency on Aging--Aging and the elderly
*Eastern Washington Health Systems Agency--Health and health facilities
*Eastern Washington University, faculty-Varied
*Municipal Research and Service Center-Legal
*National Association of Regional Councils--General local government
*Rural Housing Coalition--Housing
*U. S. Farmers Home Administration--Housing and public facilities
*U. S. Soil Conservation Service--Farming practices, erosion, environment
*WSU Cooperative Extension--Varied
*Washington State Department of Social and Health Services--Aging, health, poverty
*Washington State Department of Transportation--Transportation
*Washington State Planning and Community Affairs Agency--General local government

Section V PRELIMINARY ISSUE AND PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

After reviewing the R.C.C. charge and upon considerable deliberation it was decided that a useful first step in the problem identification process would be a thorough examination or previous task force activity (see Section IV--Review of Prior Studies). The second step involved examining the criteria for selecting issues and matching these criteria against earlier task force efforts in order to further refine our assigned objectives. A final step of this initial phase of the process consisted of individual Study Group members informally polling people in and around our universities and communities in an attempt to make a preliminary list of pertinent issues and problems.

The Needs Assessment Study Group reviewed the individually constructed problem statement lists obtained by the members through informal polling, organized them under broader issue headings and developed strategies for handling procedural issues that emerged during the course of the work done to this point. After considerable dialogue a general procedure was proposed. Specifically, it was decided that:

1. The Study Group would first generate a preliminary list of approximately twenty problem statements.

2. This list would then be circulated to the RCC and subregional committee members and other appropriate groups--The list to be accompanied by a cover letter inviting respondents to further refine the problem statements or add to them as they felt necessary.

3. Based on input from this preliminary review and any obtained from responses to the task force program announcements, the task force would generate a more refined list of problem statements to be put into questionnaire form for review by a wider audience. This review would also attempt to prioritize the problem statements.

Following this clarification of procedural steps, the Study Group moved through the list of problem areas, combining or deleting as they

felt the problem identification criteria made necessary. Individual Study Group members working on assigned problem areas reviewed relevant literature, consulted experts in the field and wrote more elaborate and refined problem statements, also suggesting possible task force directions. These problem statements were then distributed to the RCC and subregional committee members and other appropriate groups for preliminary review and feedback.

Section VI FEEDBACK ON PRELIMINARY PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Approximately eight preliminary issue areas and twenty-eight specific problem statements were organized and sent to 130 selected individuals with an invitation to participate in the identification of problems and issues confronting north central and eastern Washington citizens. While the return was rather sparse relative to the number of requests sent out, the replies from people throughout the PRI region were viewed by the Study Group as genuinely helpful.

The nature of the feedback received was found to fall into three distinct categories. The largest consisted of new problem identification. A second category of considerable size involved the refinement and endorsement of the issues and problem statements selected by the Study Group. The third category of responses consisted primarily of timely cautions about duplication of effort.

All feedback material was summarized and distributed to Study Group members. New problem suggestions were critically examined in light of the criteria for problem selection. After considerable debate it was de-

cided to expand the issue areas from eight to eleven and the problem statements (roughly 3 to 4 per issue area) from twenty-eight to thirty-seven. The Study Group then decided to implement a survey of the general populace in the 15 county PRI area, a target group of policy makers (elected county and city public officials), and PRI staff and partner participants. It was further decided that survey questions would focus on: 1) the relative importance of identified issue areas; 2) the relative importance of specific problems within issue areas; and 3) omitted issue areas and specific problems.

Section VII SURVEY DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Survey Rationale

The decision to conduct a survey was not made until well after the Study Group had begun its work. After a review of existing data and several attempts to obtain input from citizens, public officials, and PRI participants, a set of tentative task force topics had been identified. However, at that time it was felt necessary to obtain more specific input on these topics from citizens and public officials in the PRI region to help prioritize them. The survey, then, was undertaken to provide one more source of data for recommending priority task force topics.

Questionnaire

The eight-page questionnaire (see Appendix B) used in this survey consisted of two major segments. In the first, eleven issue areas corresponding to those identified through the preliminary work of the Study Group

were presented to respondents. For each issue area, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt it was a problem for eastern Washington communities. Respondents were then asked which of these they felt were the first, second, and third most importnat issues facing communities in eastern Washington. The second major segment of the questionnaire was an elaboration of the first. Here, specific dimensions of each issue area were presented for respondents to again indicate the extent to which they felt these represented problems for their communities.

The questionnaire also allowed for open-ended responses in both the general issue area and specific problem segments. Respondents could thus write in their own issues and problems if they found those specified in the questionnaire to be inappropriate or too restrictive. Futher information was solicited by asking respondents to indicate which single problem they felt was most important for a group of citizens, agency officials, and college faculty to work toward solving. A brief set of demographic questions was also included to gather information on respondent's place of residence, years lived at that residence, and age.

Sample

The population sampled in this survey included all citizens living in the fifteen county PRI region whose names were listed in most recently published public telephone directories. Out of this total population, 2,000 households were surveyed (500 from each of the four PRI sub-regions). Because PRI sub-regions were used as sampling frames, the number of house-

holds drawn from each community was proportionate to that community's contribution to the total sub-region population. Households included in the survey were selected systematically from public telephone directories in a manner that produces a representative sampling of citizens in each community where those households are located. Since the interest of the Study Group was primarily in the concerns of citizens in rural eastern Washington, the incorporated area of Spokane was excluded from the survey.

The public officials included in the survey were all mayors, town council-people, county commissioners, auditors, assessors, clerks, treasurers, and sheriffs in the fifteen-county PRI region. This group numbered 735 in all. These persons were selected using most recently published directories of county and local government officials. Aslo included in the survey as a separate group were approximately 100 persons who have management or advisory roles in PRI.

Implementation

Questionnaires were sent by mail to all citizens and public officials on April 7, 1981. Separate cover letters (see Appendix B) were sent to citizens and public officials along with the questionnaire to introduce PRI and to explain the purpose of the survey. Public officials were provided with an anonymity postcard to return separately indicating they had returned their questionnaire. This permitted a guarantee of absolute confidentiality as no questionnaire could be associated with any individual public official. PRI participants were initially given an opportunity to

fill out a questionnaire at the 1981 PRI Forum. Those PRI participants not attending the Forum were later sent questionnaires by mail.

One week after the initial April 7th mail-out, a reminder postcard was sent to all citizens and public officials urging them to return their questionnaire, or, if they had returned it, thanking them for doing so. Four weeks after the initial mail-out, a second letter and replacement questionnaire were sent to all citizens and public officials who had not yet returned their questionnaires. Due to time constraints, no further follow-ups were used. Questionnaires were coded, keypunched, and data put onto computer tape at Washington State University.

Response Rates

Response rates varied surprisingly across sub-regions and respondent sub-groups. The table below shows the final disposition of returns by sub-region and sub-group of respondents.

Sub-Group	Total N	Undeliverable	Refused*	Deliverable	Completed Returns	Response Rate**
PRI	~ 100	--	--	~ 100	65	65%
Citizens	2,000	183	103	1,817	719	40%
Public Officials	735	3	15	732	530	72%
Sub-Region (citizens only)						
Eastern	500	45***	--	455	213	47%
Central	500	45***	--	455	163	36%
Western	500	45***	--	455	182	40%
Southeastern	500	45***	--	455	160	35%

* Refused questionnaires are those which are returned but not filled out.

** Response rate is calculated by dividing the number of completed returned by the number of deliverable questionnaires.

*** Numbers of undeliverable questionnaires were not recorded by sub-region. For purposes of calculating return rates, numbers of undeliverables are assumed to be distributed equally across sub-regions.

The response rate for public officials can be considered excellent in that only two follow-ups (i.e., the reminder postcard and second letter) were used in this survey. The response rate for citizens was lower than expected using these follow-up techniques. Many of the written comments received from citizens suggested a prevailing attitude of cynicism toward surveys of this type and toward groups like PRI. Without careful attention to the cover letter and information on PRI included in the questionnaire, some people also mistakenly malign PRI as "another group wasting taxpayer money doing surveys instead of taking any real action." Such attitudes may account in part for the lower than usual response rate among citizens.

Another factor which may account for this is suggested by looking at the differential response rates across sub-regions, particularly the higher return rate observed from the eastern sub-region. The title of the questionnaire itself may have had something to do with this. "Priorities of Eastern Washington" may have implied greater relevance to persons living in those eastern-most counties, thus eliciting a higher response rate from them. Conversely, this title may have suggested to persons in northcentral and southcentral counties that the survey did not really apply to them, thus depressing response rates among citizens living in these areas.

Section VIII NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS

(Overall Priorities, Detailed Results within Subregions, and Identification of Top Priority Concerns in P.R.I. Subregions)

The results of the needs assessment survey are reported in a series of five tables displayed on the following pages. Survey results are reported within the context of two specific concerns:

1. To present evidence of the top overall concerns for major issues in the 15-county P.R.I. region; and
2. To present detailed findings on specific problem statements for each P.R.I. subregion (see map in Appendix C).

All of the survey results have been reported in terms of simple percentages in order to minimize complexity and maximize self-directed study of results by the reader of this report. Similarly, the single figure for the percentage of persons indicating a "serious concern" is used throughout to simplify the display and comprehension of findings. (A more detailed analysis of the needs assessment survey results will be prepared and made available to interested parties upon the completion and submission of this document to the Regional Coordinating Committee.)

Top Overall Concerns in the P.R.I. Region: Consistent Findings Based Upon Three Forms of Evidence

Tables 1 through 5 on the following pages display the results obtained from asking survey respondents three different types of questions about their level of concern for particular types of problems faced by local communities in the P.R.I. region. Each type of question is designed to identify the top concerns of individuals in an importantly different way. First, survey participants were asked to respond to a listing of eleven major issue areas by indicating the degree of seriousness they associated

with each area. The question used read as follows: "Listed below are some ideas we heard from citizens about general issues now facing eastern Washington communities. For each issue please indicate whether you believe each is NOT a problem, a SLIGHT problem, a MODERATE problem, a SERIOUS problem, or DON'T KNOW on that issue."

The purpose for using questions such as this is to acquaint the respondent with the kinds of topics (uncovered in our earlier review of previous studies) to consider in formulating opinions about problems in their local area--to provide respondents with a common base from which to make their performance known. A question of this sort also allows us to get a reading on how the various comparison groups (e.g., P.R.I. participants, citizens, and elected officials) perceive each of the most commonly referenced problem areas of rural community life.

Responses to this item are reported in Table 1. The general issue areas are recorded on the table in the rank order of their importance as indicated by the percentage of respondents indicating that they attached SERIOUS concern to that particular issue. It is quite evident from Table 1 that prevention and control of rural crime and concern over sufficient monies to provide needed local government services are the top two concerns of eastern Washingtonians--among those major issue areas listed. For all three comparison groups-P.R.I. participants, citizens and elected public officials--these two areas appear among their two top concerns. There is also considerable consistency in concern for these issues across all four subregions.

Table 2 reports findings based upon a much different kind of question. Here, the respondent is asked to make a determination of the "most important problem" from the listing of eleven general issue areas. The

Table 1. Percent of Respondents Expressing Serious Concern Over Each Issue Area.

* Rank	Major Issue Areas	Type of Respondent			Subregions			
		PRI	Citizens	Officials	East	West	Central	Southeast
1 (31.5)	Prevent and Control of rural crime	39%	30%	31%	26%	29%	38%	33%
2 (30.75)	Not enough money to provide needed local government services	64	19	44	40	31	25	27
3 (17)	Adequacy of cultural (e.g., music, theatrical)opportunities	19	17	16	17	17	22	12
4 (15.75)	Community decline	30	14	16	17	10	18	18
5 (14.25)	Effectiveness of local government	38	14	11	15	12	10	20
6 (12.25)	Rapid community growth	38	11	13	19	14	7	9
7.5 (11.5)	Adequacy of health and medical services	26	12	11	13	7	18	8
7.5 (11.5)	Adequacy of management and protection of natural resources	35	11	9	15	11	6	14
9 (11)	Adequacy of education opportunities for adults	28	10	9	11	12	13	8
10 (10)	Adequacy of services for senior citizens	16	9	11	13	10	8	9
11 (8.5)	Adequacy of recreational opportunities	3	9	10	10	4	10	10

* Ranking based upon the mean of the "% serious" concern figure listed for the four subregions.

Table 2. Percent of Respondents Identifying Each Major Areas as "Most Important Problem" of Local Communities in Their Area.

* Rank	Major Issue Areas	Type of Respondent			Subregions			
		PR!	Citizens	Officials	East	West	Central	Southeast
1 (27.5)	Prevention and control of rural crime	15%	30%	22%	19%	29%	34%	28%
2 (19.25)	Not enough money to provide needed local government services	19	10	33	24	21	12	20
3 (12)	Adequacy of health and medical services	8	15	11	13	8	22	5
4 (9.25)	Community decline	3	8	12	9	4	11	13
5 (6.5)	Effectiveness of local government	13	7	5	5	6	4	11
6 (6)	Rapid community growth	16	6	6	10	5	4	5
7.5 (4.25)	Adequacy of services for senior citizens	3	5	3	5	6	3	3
7.5 (4.25)	Adequacy of management and protection of natural resources	7	6	2	7	5	1	4
9 (3.5)	Adequacy of education opportunities	11	4	1	2	6	3	3
10 (1.75)	Adequacy of cultural (e.g., music, theatrical) opportunities	3	3	1	2	2	1	2
11 (1.5)	Adequacy of recreational opportunities	0	2	1	0	1	3	2

* Ranking based upon the mean of the "% saying most important problem" for local communities in their area for the four subregions.

question used read: "Which of the above do you consider the most important problems of communities in your local area?" The purpose of asking this type of question is to force the respondent to make choices between problem areas--i.e., to "prioritize" their concerns. It would be possible for someone to have indicated very high levels of concern about all of the issues, hence giving no indication of the relative degree of concern actually felt. Similarly, it is known that a significant proportion of persons avoid extreme categories on questionnaires as a matter of personal practice (a phenomenon typically labelled as one form of "response bias"). Hence, we would have no information on the character of relative importance attached to the several major issue areas from those persons who did not mark any items with the SERIOUS concern option. Table 2 reports the results of this form of questionnaire item.

The findings displayed in Table 2 once more point to the primacy of concerns for the prevention and control of rural crime and the adequacy of money to provide needed local government services. Those two problem areas are among the top three ranking issues for citizens (ranking one and three, respectively), and among the top two (ranking two and one, respectively) for the elected local officials. Once more, there is substantial agreement across each of the four subregions with respect to the primary importance of these two issue areas.

Finally, yet a third form of questions was put to the respondents of the needs assessment survey. Each survey participant, upon the completion of the rest of the questionnaire, was asked to record the one topic they considered to be the most appropriate for a "task force" to work on. The item used for this question was as follows: "Now, please think a moment about the possibility of citizens, agency officials and faculty from our

colleges and universities working together over a period of several months to understand and try to find solutions for problems facing our rural communities. What one problem do you feel is the most important one that you would like to see a group like this working on?" The written responses of survey participants were categorized into one of twelve categories--one each for the eleven major issue areas used above, and an additional category for "other" general problem areas. The results for this question are reported in Table 3.

Again, the primacy of two concerns is evidenced--the prevention and control of rural crime and the problem of sufficient money to provide needed local government services. Of all the issue areas listed, these two general areas received the highest proportionate support for the formation of task forces in eastern Washington. It must be noted, however, that the magnitudes of support for task forces of a specific direction are quite small, indicating that a relatively large proportion of citizens and elected public officials are not prepared to issue recommendations on task force topics. It is particularly interesting to note that just as P.R.I. participants in the survey were likely to express a higher degree of concern on all of the major issue areas on the first question than any other group (on the average), they are also more likely to have a clear idea of what kinds of task forces are needed for eastern Washington.

It was possible to categorize the majority of problems identified in response to this question using the eleven general issue areas around which the questionnaire was designed. The percentages of these responses which could be coded as falling under each issue area are reported in the text. A large percentage of respondents (32%), however, formulated pro-

Table 3. Percent of Respondents Identifying Each Major Issue Area as a "Top Priority" Item for a Task Force Composed of Citizens, Agency Officials and College Faculty.

* Rank		Major Issue Areas	Type of Respondent			Subregions			
			PRI	Citizens	Officials	East	West	Central	Southeast
1	(13)	Prevention and control of rural crime	4%	14%	11%	8%	11%	17%	16%
2	(9)	Not enough money to provide needed local government services	13	6	14	11	9	5	11
3	(8.75)	Effectiveness of local government	17	6	10	9	9	6	11
4.5	(7.75)	Community decline	11	10	10	9	8	13	11
4.5	(7.75)	Adequacy of management and protection of natural resources	6	7	8	8	10	5	8
6	(6.25)	Adequacy of recreational opportunities	0	9	3	4	7	7	7
7	(4.75)	Adequacy of health and medical services	6	5	4	5	2	11	1
8	(3.25)	Rapid community growth	15	2	3	6	3	2	2
9.5	(2.5)	Adequacy of services for senior citizens	0	4	2	5	1	1	3
9.5	(2.5)	Adequacy of educational opportunities for adults	6	2	2	1	2	3	4
11	(1)	Adequacy of cultural (e.g., music, theatrical) opportunities	0	2	0	0	1	3	0

* Ranking based upon the mean of the "% top priority task force issue" figures for the four subregions.

Table 4a. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY P.R.I. REGION	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST			
Health and Medical Services	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Lack of doctors and nurses	12%	20%	11%	6%	19%	25%	9%	11%	12%	16%
Inadequate emergency services	16	18	15	6	20	22	6	5	14	14
Inadequate mental health services (e.g., alcoholism, family counseling, emotional disorders, etc.)	10	12	18	11	15	12	16	9	14	11
	(n=192)	(n=181)	(n=157)	(n=82)	(n=143)	(n=92)	(n=138)	(n=92)	(n=719)	(n=530)

Table 4b. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: RAPID COMMUNITY GROWTH

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST		P.R.I. Region	
Rapid Community Growth	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Community is not prepared to deal with growth	21%	27%	17%	19%	8%	14%	14%	14%	16%	20%
Difficulty in providing adequate community services	13	27	12	17	9	21	15	9	12	20
Shortage of housing	20	32	24	20	7	18	13	11	16	22
Negative effects on young people	21	24	23	18	25	28	24	20	23	23

23

Table 4c. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: COMMUNITY DECLINE

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY P.R.I. REGION	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST			
Community Decline	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
High unemployment	29%	23%	33%	35%	28%	28%	27%	17%	29%	25%
Unavailability of consumer goods and services that people need	15	19	11	6	22	15	20	11	17	14
Decline of local tax base	16	29	14	26	7	20	9	15	12	24
Effect of decline on schools	20	28	19	18	22	23	27	19	22	23

Table 4d. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST		P.R.I. Region	
Services for Senior Citizens	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Inadequate re-creational and/ or educational services	9%	17%	11%	2%	10%	14%	4%	6%	9%	12%
Inadequate health and medical services	14	21	11	6	18	17	12	14	14	16
Ability of senior citizens to get to where services are offered	21	25	14	12	10	13	14	7	15	16

Table 4e. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF RURAL CRIME

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY P.R.I. Region	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST			
Prevention and Control of Rural Crime	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Lack of public awareness of how to prevent crime	22%	15%	25%	18%	19%	28%	21%	18%	23%	19%
Inadequate number of law enforcement personnel	27	44	21	24	23	30	22	33	23	35
Inadequate jail or detention facilities	33	39	38	49	18	23	34	47	31	39
Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	38	40	40	35	30	39	50	53	39	42

Table 4f. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: NOT ENOUGH MONEY TO PROVIDE NEEDED LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST		P.R.I. Region	
Not Enough Money to Provide Needed Local Government Services	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Deciding what services to eliminate in the face of lower revenues	27%	47%	25%	51%	19%	34%	25%	32%	24%	42%
Inadequate help from state government in funding local services	24	42	22	48	16	28	19	34	20	39
State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	26	50	39	49	35	39	31	38	32	45

Table 4g. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST		P.R.I. Region	
Effectiveness of Local Government	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Lack of training opportunities for city and county officials needed for carrying out their responsibilities	14%	12%	14%	11%	16%	16%	13%	11%	14%	12%
Lack of resources to attract and retain qualified people in local government	22	31	22	24	23	32	21	23	22	28
Lack of information for local officials to use in making decisions	11	16	12	17	11	16	13	12	11	15

Table 4h. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: ADULT EDUCATION

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST		P.R.I. Region	
Adult Education	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Lack of adult education opportunities (e.g., night school, craft classes, etc.)	8%	9%	13%	5%	14%	12%	7%	4%	10%	8%
People can't afford to drive to where programs are available	14	23	24	17	24	27	15	7	19	19
A lack of information about adult education opportunities	7	8	10	5	13	12	12	7	10	8

Table 4i. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY P.R.I. Region	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST			
Resource Management and Conservation	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Too much absentee ownership of land	12%	15%	11%	10%	12%	21%	10%	11%	11%	14%
Inadequate control of soil erosion	16	12	6	6	5	11	15	8	11	10
Inadequate methods for disposing of hazardous chemical wastes	22	20	26	13	21	19	27	20	24	18
Too much pressure on available hunting and fishing areas	23	21	44	22	19	15	27	21	28	20
Too much farmland going to other uses	23	20	33	14	9	9	26	22	23	17

Table 4j. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY P.R.I. Region	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST			
Recreation opportunities	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Lack of organized recreation programs for youth	20%	21%	28%	23%	36%	25%	23%	19%	26%	21%
Lack of parks and playgrounds	9	13	9	7	10	11	8	4	9	10
Lack of funds to maintain existing public recreational facilities	19	35	19	37	17	25	24	33	20	33

Table 4k. Percent of Officials and Citizens Indicating Serious Concern About Each Problem Statement in Each of the Major Issue Areas: CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	SUBREGIONS								15-COUNTY P.R.I. Region	
	EAST		WEST		CENTRAL		SOUTHEAST			
Cultural Opportunities	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials	Citizens	Officials
Inadequate opportunities to see music and theatrical productions	14%	15%	24%	18%	25%	29%	12%	11%	19%	18%
Inadequate opportunities for participation in music and theatrical performances	13	16	14	12	19	25	11	4	14	15
Inadequate access to public television and/or radio broadcasts	4	4	15	9	9	9	6	4	8	6

blems which did not fit neatly into any of these eleven categories. Included here are the other major problem areas which respondents identified in this part of the questionnaire. Variations which appeared under these problem areas are also noted.

"OTHER" PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY CITIZEN RESPONDENTS

Community

-need for local autonomy, self-reliance
-lack of community pride
-lack of city/county cooperation

Transportation

-bus
-rail
-general

Moral

-lack of ethics and morality in society
-need for more religious training
-need to control dogmatic fundamentalists

Family

-decline of farm family
-need to strengthen

Training for Handicapped

Immigration

-influx of illegal aliens
-need for bilingual education

Schools

-funding

Alternate Energy Development

-wind
-solar

Nuclear Waste Disposal

Waste of Time and Resources on Surveys

"OTHER" PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Local Government

- -need for unification
- -need for streamlining
- -need for autonomy

Schools

- -funding

Taxes

- -need for more equitable tax structure
- -need to close loopholes for wealthy

Moral

- -youth

Solid Waste Management

Alternate Energy Development

Training and Recreation for Handicapped

Community

- -lack of pride
- -need for autonomy

Transportation

- -air
- -rail
- -general

Immigration

Waste of Time and Resources on Surveys

"OTHER" PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY PRI PARTICIPANTS

Futurism

- -need for

Community

- -need to develop self-reliance
- -lack of cooperation

Sexism

-need for more women in planning groups

Local Government

-need for more citizen involvement

Concern Over Specific Problems: A More Detailed Reading on Degree of Citizen and Official Concern With Specific Topics Within Each P.R.I. Subregion.

Table 4 (subtables 4.a through 4.k) reports the findings pertaining to a series of specific problem statements relating to each of the eleven major issue areas used in the foregoing analyses. The purposes underlying the use of this section in the needs assessment survey were two-fold: first, to derive a more exact picture of the range of problems perceived under each of the broad, general issue area headings; and, secondly, to provide each subregion with more detailed information on the range of public and elected officials concerns existing in their particular multi-county area.

The several sections of Table 4 provide simple percentage distributions for each of the specific problem statements, recorded separately for subregional citizens and elected public officials. These tables allow the reader to compare the relative degrees of concern expressed for specific problems, to rank those concerns for their own subregion, to compare their rankings with those of other subregions, and to assess the degrees of agreement between citizens and elected officials.

Top Ranking Specific Problem Statements: Ranking for Top Five Specific Problem Statements for Citizens and Public Elected Officials in Each

P.R.I. Subregion

The final series of tabular figures (Table 5, subtable 5.a through 5.e) summarize the findings presented in Table 4. For each subregion a ranking of the five most highly regarded program concerns for both citizens and elected public officials are listed. Table 5.e lists this same information for the entire 15-county P.R.I. region. This final table has the dual purpose of simplifying the interpretation of the data presented in Table 4, and of providing a quick means of determining whether there are any specific problem areas which receive marked attention across all of the P.R.I. subregions.

On the issue of items of common concern it should be noted that two items receive particularly frequent high rankings from elected public officials--"state and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money" and "deciding what services to eliminate in the face of lower revenues." Among citizens, on the other hand, two quite different items appear as topics of frequent concern across most if not all of the subregions--"inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders" and "inadequate jail or detention facilities." The degree of agreement between citizens and officials varies between subregions, as do the top ranking concerns. These overall top rankings, along with the more detailed distribution recorded in Table 4, will provide the subregional committees with a reasonable picture of the specific views of citizens and elected public officials in their respective geographical areas.

Selected Comments by Citizens, Public Officials, and PRI Participants

In surveys such as this it is often the case that respondents can

Table 5a. Five Top Priority Problem Statements for Citizens and Public Officials: EASTERN SUBREGION.

Citizens (n=192)			Officials (n=181)		
Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem	Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem
Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	1	38%	State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	1	50%
Inadequate jail or detention facilities	2	33%	Deciding what services to eliminate in the face of lower revenues	2	47%
High unemployment	3	29%	Inadequate number of law enforcement personnel	3	44%
Inadequate number of law enforcement personnel	4.5	27%	Inadequate help from state government in funding local services	4	42%
Deciding what services to eliminate in the face of lower revenues	4.5	27%	Inadequate methods and facilities	5	40%

Table 5b. Five Top Priority Problem Statements for Citizens and Public Officials: WESTERN SUBREGION.

Citizens (n=192)			Officials (n=181)		
Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem	Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem
Too much pressure of the available hunting and fishing areas	1	44%	Deciding what services to eliminate in the face of lower revenues	1	51%
Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	2	40%	State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	2.5	49%
State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	3	39%	Inadequate jail or detention facilities	2.5	49%
Inadequate jail or detention facilities	4	38%	Inadquate help from state government in funding local services	4	48%
High unemployment	5.5	33%	Lack of funds to maintain existing public recreation facilities	5	37%
Too much farmland going to other uses	5.5	33%			

Table 5c. Five Top Priority Problem Statements for Citizens and Public Officials: CENTRAL SUBREGION

Citizens (n=192)			Officials (n=181)		
Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem	Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem
Lack of organized recreation programs for youth	1	36%	State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	1.5	39%
State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	2	35%	Inadquate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	1.5	39%
Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	3	30%	Deciding what services to eliminate in the face of lower revenues	3	34%
High unemployment	4	28%	Lack of resources to attract and retain qualified people in local government	4	32%
Negative effects of rapid community growth on young people	5.5	25%	Inadequate number of law enforcement personnel	5	30%
Inadequate opportunities to see music and theatrical productions	5.5	25%			

Table 5d. Five Top Priority Problem Statements for Citizens and Public Officials: SOUTHEASTERN SUBREGION.

Citizens (n=192)			Officials (n=181)		
Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem	Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem
Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	1	50%	Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	1	53%
Inadequate jail or detention facilities	2	34%	Inadequate jail or detention facilities	2	47%
State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	3	31%	State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	3	38%
High unemployment	5.25	27%	Inadequate help from state government in funding local services	4	34%
Negative effect upon schools of community decline	5.25	27%	Inadequate number of law enforcement personnel	5.5	33%
Inadequate methods for disposing of hazardous chemical wastes	5.25	27%	Lack of funds to maintain existing public recreational facilities	5.5	33%
Too much pressure on available hunting and fishing areas	5.25	27%			

Table 5e. Five Top Priority Problem Statements for Citizens and Public Officials:
15 - COUNTY PRI REGION.

Citizens (n=192)			Officials (n=181)		
Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem	Problem Statement	Rank	% Serious Problem
Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	1	39%	State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	1	45%
State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	2	32%	Deciding what services to eliminate in the face of lower revenues	2.5	42%
Inadequate jail or detention facilities	3	31%	Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	2.5	42%
High unemployment associated with community decline	4	29%	Inadequate help from state government in funding local services	4.5	39%
Too much pressure on available hunting and fishing areas	5	28%	Inadequate jail or detention facilities	4.5	39%

offer insights and suggestions--though not thought of by survey designers--which prove to be quite valuable. Categorical responses (i.e., circling "slight", "moderate", "serious" in the questionnaire) do not always convey the full range of opinions, attitudes, and beliefs of respondents regarding the issues and problems dealt with in any survey. In a well-designed survey every attempt is made to elicit non-categorical responses. The comments reported here are those which were obtained in response to the question: "Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the concerns now facing communities in your area of eastern Washington?"--appearing on the back page of the questionnaire, as well as several which were offered in response to Question 5. Comments chosen for inclusion in this appendix are intended to highlight and give substance to several of the key findings of the Study Group survey. Some stand in contrast to these findings.

Growth Impacts

"The main problem in Lincoln County is the expected growth related to development of a coal-generated steam plant in the area which will mean one town of 350 will triple its size with the outlying areas receiving the overflow. This area has expereinced no growth in approximately twenty years. In order to deal with the added population--both permanent and transient--every aspect of community life will be affected. Most seriously will be the school systems and local government. Local government will suffer and added burden which could mean need for additional personnel and adequate law enforcement and jail facilities that at least meet standards. Ours has been condemned for a number of years. My personal interest is that of the court system which is experiencing a decided increase of caseload due to economic factors already and is sure to be impacted by additional populations."

Law Enforcement and Crime Prevention

"We have a real problem with law enforcement. We need a state patrol and more full-time officers in our area. We also need more industry or any kind of tourists attraction that could help provide jobs to our towns-

people. We have far too much unemployment, especially our younger people who are just getting out of high school."

"Crime prevention is tied in with more and healthier recreation for youth and people of all ages, and violent TV shows, better adult education, and responsible government. Controlling drug and alcohol abuse is a vital part of crime prevention."

"We don't need a million cops in a small town like ours. They harrass people and give them tickets that aren't deserved. Nine times out of ten when a crime is reported it either isn't investigated or they never find who did it. Vandalism is a major problem. Kids need some night-time entertainment (arcades, bowling alleys, etc.)."

Liability Insurance

"Liability insurance for cities is very expensive and the coverage restrictions are divided with a very fine line. This makes it necessary to buy additional insurance and making the already high premiums even higher. I would like to see the state make available to cities an insurance program with decent coverage in all areas at decent prices for premiums."

Civic Education

"There is a need for an effective program which would educate and inform rural residents and elected officials regarding: (1) potential impacts of projected growth and change; and (2) state and local governmental process."

Local Government Services

"Unifying our community governments and adjacent urbanized area for more effective services and more professional management is necessary. Our location 90 miles to Spokane or Wenatchee poses many problems in obtaining adequate retail outlets, medical practitioners, political recognition, and often fosters a "construction camp" attitude in the populace. We need to unify our efforts to ease our way through the financial problems of the present and future."

"Alternate organizational frameworks for providing local services, e.g., housing, food, welfare, elderly assistance, parks, streets, etc. We should recall our Republican president, Congress, and state legislators. They seem to have forgotten that the reason there were all the state and federal programs was local government wasn't meeting the need. Local government wasn't then and it can't now. They and the voters have placed every possible restriction on local government's revenue-generating capacity, yet

expecting us to pick up everyone crunched in budget cuts. Who are they kidding??????"

"Address the problem of local government city/county consolidation or charter to try and cut the costs, cut bureaucracy, and avoid duplication of services."

"A very basic problem is money. The other problems are related to this. We can, for example, easily provide adequate jails and adequate numbers of law enforcement people if we have the money to pay for these. (We don't have the money.) A second problem is the lack of understanding by public officials from outside rural areas of the problems faced by rural areas. Our county is larger than the states of Rhode Island and Delaware combined. We may not be able to do everything exactly the same way as Seattle or Spokane. For example, we provide fire protection largely through volunteers. Our quality of service is as good as Seattle's, but we have to do it differently."

"Our town is small, so is its budget and revenue. Things are tight, but we have never provided the services that city dwellers seem to require. The depressed timber industry and general economy is our problem. You are spending more one this survey than our annual budget."

"Small communities with a small population spread over a large area do not have the tax base to provide adequate services (i.e., water, sewer, fire control, law enforcement, garbage) for themselves, let alone the large amount of tourists that come in summer. It is hard to expect the small business to carry the whole load as their summer income has to stretch over a long, very slow business winter. I think law enforcement in the peak season is a very serious problem."

Neglect of Eastern Washington

"I fell that the legislature in the state of Washington is far too interested in the concerns of western Washington and we are forgotten at times."

Community Development Assistance

"Communities such as ours need experienced people in community and economic development to work with us in developing a plan to boost our local economy with better employment opportunities and improved local services. We cannot afford a planning staff or long term contract with high priced planning consultants."

Housing

"I feel housing is the Number 1 problem in our area. There is very little available that is desirable. We need information and assistance on ways to organize and avenues available to acquire more housing. Our area will have an increase in population soon if the housing is available."

Schools

"Schools in the very small towns around here are not schools as much as they are recreation and entertainment facilities for adults, with gross overemphasis on sports. Therefore, intelligent, needed consolidations are bitterly resisted, with faculties typically leading the fight. I see no hope for change."

Government Regulations

"Regulations and administrative activity aimed at large and moderate communities are simple nonsense for very small towns. For example, requirements for pounds (dog), jails, dumps, sewage disposal effluent analysis are all utterly beyond small town funding capability, and generally involve such small numbers, columns, weights, etc. that rigid adherence to requirements is foolish in most cases, and quite unnecessary."

Community Self-Reliance

"Am impressed that local people are learning to address and solve local problems without dependency on state and federal funding. If there is one area that could be enhanced it would be that of utilizing our older and senior citizens in those areas where they have become experts through experience. These people, many of whom have productive years as well as ideas, could become a vital part of many small and rural communities. Most other problems have developed as a result of dependency on government rather than initiative and self-reliance.

Community Decline

"Our worse problems at the present time is decline in population due to the fact of lack of industries, and money to provide public services, such as roads and city maintenance, which everyone in the country is having problems with at this time. Garfield County is losing their railroad, and have very few (2) places of access to the open river. There is nothing to draw any industries into the county. The only industry we have in the county is farming which is being taken over the larger farmers."

"Our town is in a stress situation. Right now, we are working with borrowed money. Our population is in a decline-thus affecting what businesses we do have and our school. We have a small but pretty park--a swimming pool which is shot and no funds to repair it. No recreational facilities for young or old and NO LOCAL MEDICAL FACILITIES for our people except what the fire department (volunteer) can offer. No drug store either. Yes, we do need help here as do many small towns or we'll eventually fold and die. It was my pleasure to answer your questions."

Transportation

"With continuing inflation and energy shortages, a study should be made about the possibilities of public transportation within and between communities."

"This is really a 'bedroom' community, with a church, school, Grain Growers, Inc., and Grange to hold us together. If we lose our gas pump and with no possibility of using the B.N.R. for transportation, we will really be up the old creek sans paddle! We are nine miles from the nearest grocery and 25 miles from a doctor. Wow! Solve that if you can! As we see it, the rising price of gasoline and the lack of transportation and the mood of the present administration threatens us. A new broom sweeps clean, we just may be swept 'under the rug' for sure."

"The small community I live in has no local grocery store, no doctor, no dentist and so on. Everytime you need glasses changed or go to a doctor, you have to call and make an appointment and then find a neighbor to take you to the doctor. There are about ten people in this community alone who have to depend on other people for taking them to get groceries, take them to a doctor, dentist, eye doctor, visiting in Spokane, any means of entertainment. The Assembly of God has a potluck once a month for the senior citizens. This is the only entertainment they have outside of church and TV."

Medical Services

"In general, our area's biggest problem is the poor medical services available. Also, the town of Chewelah has been 'ruled' by the same small group of people for too many years. In local business and government, certain families control what goes on to the extent of discouraging newcomers to get involved and trying to keep out new businesses started by out-of-town people. The merchants and city officials alike are not accommodating to 'outsiders'.

Small Town Rivalries

"The most pressing problem in this area is the small town rivalry among the local communities. Consolidation of Electric City, Grand Coulee, and Coulee Dam into one town (preferably in the same county) would eliminate costly duplication of services such as police and fire departments and other government services. The larger community could better support additional services or improvements in the present ones such as the library.

Youth

"Probably most important would be young people in our community, and maybe trying to educate the parents in raising children. I can see here in our own community that parents seem to push out the kids to devise own

entertainment, a definite lack of parental guidance which has led to a lot of drinking and more drug usage than I care to think about. We need counselors that can relate to kids and parents alike. We need a place our runaways can go to instead of hitting the road or moving with a bunch of freaks. I feel the parents of this community need to be educated somehow to realize that if their teenage children spent their evenings at home doing things with their families there would be a noticeable drop in alcohol abuse, drugs, fatal accidents, and pregnancies not to mention juvenile crime."

Section IX RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TASK FORCES

The study group was charged with making recommendations to the RCC for the formation of as many as five task forces. Based on our deliberations, we wish to recommend the formation of two task forces. In addition, we wish to discuss possible implications of subregional differences for the formation of subregional task forces, the efforts of which may have implications for most of the P.R.I. region.

RECOMMENDATION 1.

We recommend that a task force be formed with the primary goal being to investigate and suggest methods to help local government deal with declining revenues.

Emphasis would be on creating the mechanisms to effectively meet the challenge of budget austerity. Hopefully, the task force would view their work as an opportunity to shape a positive attitude toward change occurring at all levels of government.

The issue of coping with lower revenues in the face of anticipated budget cuts to be made by the Reagan administration, and likely to be echoed in the state government, was prominent throughout our discussions. This general issue was independently identified by several members of the Study Group and received support in our early activities.

Subsequent actions by the Reagan administration since January have confirmed our belief that substantial changes will occur in the amount of dollars available for local services. Over the next few years, it seems likely that changes in local budget priorities will be considered and reconsidered as the effects of federal and state reductions work their way into people's lives.

The problem of "not enough revenue to provide needed government services" was the number one concern of both P.R.I. participants and local officials, by substantial margins. It ranked second among citizen respondents. It was also the highest concern of respondents from east to west regions, and second highest in the central and southeast regions.

The three specific problem areas under this issue which were included in the questionnaire also had high rankings. All three items were among the top eight concerns of all three of the surveyed groups based on the percent identifying it as a serious problem. Thus, we conclude that the general topic we have identified is of interest and concern to a large number of people in the region.

POTENTIAL TASK FORCE DIRECTION. Specifically, the task force can approach this issue from the supply side, i.e., generating more revenue; and from the demand side, i.e., shifting or consolidating services. The following tasks and products might be possible results of this task force.

1. The task force could attempt to identify ways to generate more revenue. This would include such obvious and traditional means as increased user fees and increased taxes; but also creative or innovative ideas like local investment corporations, city/county bazaars held in conjunction with a parks arts and crafts program, auctions, or selling potholes and painting the donator's name on the patch. . . The listing of ideas with advantages/disadvantages could then be published and given to local governments. If barriers to using particular ideas were determined, these might be referred to appropriate legislators and lobbying groups for action.

2. The task force might develop a priority setting process and the using different "futuring" techniques, the task force could experiment with extrapolating the likely consequences of funding cuts and service level reductions. The product might be a workbook that gives a step-by-step process to local officials for use as a priority/impact assessment tool in balancing their budget through service cuts. By envisioning the probable future impacts of present day budget cuts, local officials might be better able to choose the "path of least negative result." In essence, this would be a matter of preparing educational materials for use by citizens and local officials in setting priorities and projecting the effects of acting on those priorities.

3. Interlocal cooperation is a oft-used term to describe the cooperative provision of services via agreement among different governmental jurisdictions. The task force may want to look at effectiveness and probability of using interlocal agreements to a greater extent. In addition, the concept of intra-local cooperation may also prove valuable. The task force could investigate how various groups or individuals within a community/county might begin taking over some service responsibilities. The task force might write up different possible services which lend themselves to interlocal or intra-local cooperation, formats for agreements, and possible need for new groups which may more effectively supply services.

4. The overall task force work product might be a Sourcebook to Local Government Officials Dealing With Austere Budgets.

RECOMMENDATION 2.

We recommend that a task force be formed to investigate the extent and nature of rural crime in eastern Washington and if needed, recommend means of responding to the identified problems.

Rural crime was identified as a potential concern in the original meeting of the task force, but it was not an area to which much attention was given in our early discussions. Mainly, we observed that it was an area of increasing concern in other rural areas of the United States and we speculated that this might be an issue in the P.R.I. region as well.

In the fall communication with P.R.I. members, we noted some general areas of rural crime that a task force might consider. These included: 1) exploration of the existence of rural crime to determine if special action is needed in eastern Washington to inform the public of the nature of the problem and how to deal with it; 2) examination of the existence of skilled people in the region who may desire to be trained to provide local probation/parole counseling duties; and 3) assessment of the need for legal services and identify barriers preventing their development. Identification of these three issues was the result of several brief discussions that usually terminated with the conclusion that we did not know whether there was a rural crime problem or not. We received very little feedback on these three concerns. Later, we decided to include rural crime in the survey as part of our effort to make the survey as comprehensive as possible.

Upon seeing the survey results, we were somewhat surprised to learn that prevention and control of rural crime emerged as the number one problem as ranked by citizens and number two as ranked by local officials. It was also ranked as either the number one or number two problem in all four

P.R.I. subregions.

The four specific problem areas mentioned in the PRI questionnaire were also ranked very high as areas of serious concern. "Inadequate methods for handling juvenile offenders," "inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders," "inadequate jail or detention facilities," and "lack of public awareness of how to prevent crime," were all ranked among the top concerns of citizens and officials, though not among P.R.I. participants. The former three concerns were ranked among the top eight by both citizens and officials.

After considerable contemplation, during which the Study Group noted high concern for these problem areas, but felt unable to specify the exact nature of the problem, we concluded that there might be a particular way in which a task force could make an effective contribution to dealing with rural crime in eastern Washington. We recommend that a Conference Planning Group be formed for the purpose of convening a conference on rural crime in eastern Washington. An effort would be made to bring together a large number of local officials, law enforcement officials and agency representatives concerned with rural crime. Faculty from criminal justice and other crime related programs at community colleges and universities would also be included. In addition, people from the National Rural Crime Center at Ohio State University and other national figures would be invited to the conference.

The proposed conference would be structured around presentations by people familiar with the growth of rural crime across the United States. Local officials would be asked to talk about rural crime as they see it. Reaction and discussion time would focus on the extent to which we have a rural crime problem in eastern Washington and involve local officials,

local law enforcement officials and university and college faculty.

If the conference concludes that there is a rural crime problem and something needs to be done about it, then as a result of the conference, the Conference Planning Group would be expanded to a "Task Force" in hopes that useful actions would be taken. It would be at that point that more specific task force activities would be determined. An example of a possible task force activity might be to develop means of informing rural people about steps they can take to help prevent crime.

Several considerations lead to our recommendation of this particular task force for examining the rural crime problem. It became evident in our discussions that there are a large number of college and university faculty who are concerned with crime and criminological issues. However, it is our impression that they do very little research on rural crime, per se. To most of them, crime is still defined as an urban problem. One of the outcomes of the proposed forum might be to interest such people in studying and attempting to do something about rural crime.

Another outcome might be to make it known to some local officials that they are not alone in having some type of rural crime problem in their community. It is our hope, that a forum on rural crime would be timely and stimulate actions that would not otherwise be taken to resolve an apparently major concern of many citizens and local officials.

We also feel that rural crime may provide an excellent test of the task force concept. It would require making contacts with citizens, local officials, and university and college faculty with whom P.R.I. has not previously worked. The chances of impact also seem to be quite

great. Citizen and public official interest, as expressed through the survey suggest that the conference and subsequent task force activities could have high visibility throughout the region.

P.R.I. claims to have group process skills as one of its main internal resources. It should be a considerable challenge to organize and implement a conference for the specific purpose of determining whether we have a rural crime problem in eastern Washington, and if we do, what should be done about it.

RECOMMENDATION 3.

We recommend that subregional task forces be formed, each of which would deal with an issue chosen by each subregion, but which has some relevance for the entire region.

It became apparent to the Study Group that wide variation exists with respect to the ranking of the other issues and problems included in the survey. For example, whereas the central subregion identified adequacy of health and medical services as a high priority concern, it seemed to be a very low priority among the west and southeast region. In contrast, adequacy of cultural activities ranked very high in the central subregion and lower in the others. Also, rapid community growth was a high concern in the eastern subregion, but low in the central subregion. A review of the data discussed in a preceeding chapter suggests to us that subregional analysis of the data, with which the Study Group is prepared to help, might lead to the formation of unique task forces of high subregional interest.

The Study Group will make detailed analyses of the survey data for

respondents from each subregion available to each subregional committee if requested. These data can then be examined to see what concerns seem most pressing to citizens, local officials, and P.R.I. participants from the respective subregions.

APPENDIX A

PRIOR STUDIES AND REPORTS -- An Annotated Bibliography

ALTERNATIVES FOR WASHINGTON, Vol. 1, Report No. 1, May, 1975.

A compendium of issues and recommended solutions by a statewide task force on future growth and development. The task force canvassed the state through extensive public meetings and questionnaires to develop proposals for action in each of 13 different categories: Conservation of natural resources and energy, Protection of the natural environment, Population growth and settlement, Land use, Transportation, Crime, Education and vocational training, Citizen involvement in public decision making, Senior citizens, Housing, Employment, Health care, and Governance.

1980 PRI PUBLIC FORUM

A synthesis of the results from several workshops held at the annual PRI Forum in Pullman. The Forum theme was "The Quality of Life in Rural Eastern Washington: An Agenda for Action." Included are major issue items within seven categories: Transportation, Energy, Quality of life, Impacts of growth, Land use, Declining public income and inflation, and Water considerations.

REVITALIZING RURAL WASHINGTON -- Report and Recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Rural Affairs, January, 1971

Identifies major issues in rural Washington and offers recommended solutions. The task force was comprised of four issue oriented subcommittees: Rural-Urban population shifts; Government structure; Health, Housing and environment; and Public services.

APPENDIX B

PARTNERSHIP FOR RURAL IMPROVEMENT
Washington State University
330 Cleveland Hall
Pullman, Washington 99164

April 7, 1981

During the next two years, small groups of citizens, agency workers and faculty from our community colleges and universities will be formed. The purpose of these temporary "task forces" is to look at specific concerns shared by residents of eastern Washington and suggest possible solutions.

Last year we formed such a group to look at what railroad abandonment meant for rural communities of eastern Washington. Just now a second task force is being formed to examine the potential for rural public transportation in the face of ever higher energy costs.

Before deciding the topics of future task forces, we feel it is important that we ask citizens what they view as emerging problems of their communities. The enclosed questionnaire contains many of the ideas being considered. We are sending it to a random sample of eastern Washington residents to ask which of these are important problems that citizens, agencies, colleges and universities should be working together to solve.

Your responses are confidential. An identification number is on the front page of the questionnaire simply so that your name can be checked off of the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. This survey is voluntary, but we would really appreciate your taking a few minutes to let us know what you think. If for some reason you don't wish to fill it out, simply return the blank questionnnaire to us.

Many thanks in advance for your help. If you have any questions, I would be happy to try to answer them. My telephone number is 509-335-5509.

Cordially,

Richard A Hagood

Richard Hagood
PRI Administrator

RH:MS:db

Offices:

Big Bend Community College
Building 2400
Moses Lake, WA 98837

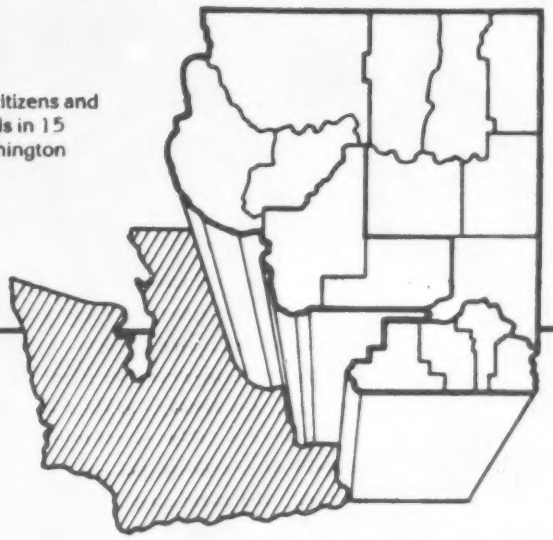
Eastern Washington University
Isle Hall 201
Cheney, WA 99004

Spokane Falls Community College
Continuing Education Center
Spokane, WA 99204

Wenatchee Valley College
Batjer Hall
Wenatchee, WA 99801

PRIORITIES FOR EASTERN WASHINGTON

A survey of citizens and public officials in 15 eastern Washington counties.



The Partnership For Rural Improvement

Offices In

Wenatchee Valley College (Wenatchee)
Big Bend Community College (Moses Lake)
Spokane Falls Community College (Spokane)
Walla Walla Community College (Walla Walla)
Eastern Washington University (Cheney)
Washington State University (Pullman)

1

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR RURAL IMPROVEMENT (PRI) is a voluntary association of individuals and organizations working together to improve the quality of rural life in eastern Washington. The Partnership was established in 1976 with the help of a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. One of the main goals of PRI is to make better use of the resources of public agencies and educational institutions (such as those listed on the cover) in helping people in rural communities solve various types of problems. Often PRI plays a coordinating role in bringing these sources of help together in the best way possible to solve a problem. Many times PRI staff and partners work directly with citizens.

EXAMPLES OF PAST PRI ACTIVITIES include: provision of technical assistance to Newport Friends of Library; sponsorship of transportation conference in Moses Lake for Grant and Adams counties; assisting organization of Women's Resource Center in north central Washington; aid in developing comprehensive plans for communities of Reardan, Almira, Rockford, Electric City, and Cheney; assistance in establishing Community Resource Center at Wenatchee Valley College; assistance in conducting community development surveys in Oakesdale and Grand Coulee Dam area, preparation of video tapes on budgeting, accounting, and reporting systems for local governments; preparation of manual on growth impact analysis for local officials; and presentation of community skills and leadership training workshops region-wide.

A PREVIOUS PRI SPONSORED TASK FORCE studied the problems associated with railroad abandonment in eastern Washington. This involved citizens living in rural communities and university researchers working together to determine the effects railroad abandonment may have on small rural communities. The information produced by this study is now being used as a guide to understanding what may happen to communities experiencing abandonment of railroad service and how they can deal with problems which may arise. This represents one type of task force activity, geared to addressing the specific issue of railroad abandonment. Other task forces might operate differently and produce other types of products depending on the nature of the specific problem they address.

The questions which follow are the result of conversations with people in the eastern Washington Counties shown on the cover.

Q- 1 Listed below are some ideas we heard from citizens about general issues now facing eastern Washington communities. For each issue please indicate whether you believe each is NOT a problem, a SLIGHT problem, a MODERATE problem, a SERIOUS problem or DON'T KNOW on that issue.

	To what extent is this a problem? (Please circle your opinion)				
A. Adequacy of health and medical services.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
B. Rapid community growth.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
C. Community decline	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
D. Adequacy of services for senior citizens.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
E. Prevention and control of rural crime	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
F. Not enough money to provide needed local government services.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
G. Effectiveness of local government.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
H. Adequacy of educational opportunities for adults	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
I. Adequacy of management and protection of natural resources	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
J. Adequacy of recreational opportunities	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
K. Adequacy of cultural (e.g., music, theatrical) opportunities . . .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
L. Others? (Please describe)					
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW

Q- 2 Which of the above do you consider the most important problems of communities in your local area? (Please put letter of problem area in appropriate box.)

☐ MOST IMPORTANT ☐ SECOND MOST IMPORTANT ☐ THIRD MOST IMPORTANT

3

Q- 3 Now, we'd like to get a little more specific. Listed below, under each of the general issues mentioned earlier are some specific problems that have been brought to our attention. For each item please indicate whether you believe it is NOT a problem, a SLIGHT problem, a MODERATE problem, a SERIOUS problem or DON'T KNOW.

	To what extent is this a problem? (Please circle your opinion)				
HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES					
1 Lack of doctors and nurses.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Inadequate emergency services . . .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Inadequate mental health services (e.g., alcoholism, family counseling, emotional disorders)	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
RAPID COMMUNITY GROWTH					
1 Community is not prepared to deal with growth	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Difficulty in providing adequate community services.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Shortage of housing	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Negative effects on young people.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
5 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
COMMUNITY DECLINE					
1 High unemployment	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Unavailability of consumer goods and services that people need . .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Decline of local tax base	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Effect of decline on schools. . . .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
5 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW

4

To what extent is this a problem?
(Please circle your opinion)

SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

1 Inadequate recreational/educational services	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Inadequate health and medical services	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Ability of senior citizens to get to where services are offered	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW

PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF RURAL CRIME

1 Lack of public awareness of how to prevent crime	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Inadequate number of law enforcement personnel	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Inadequate jail or detention facilities	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Inadequate methods and facilities for handling juvenile offenders	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
5 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW

NOT ENOUGH MONEY TO PROVIDE NEEDED LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

1 Deciding what services to eliminate in the face of lower revenues	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Inadequate help from state government in funding local services	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 State and federal regulations that prevent best use of tax money	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW

EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1 Lack of training opportunities for city and county officials needed for carrying out their responsibilities	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Lack of resources to attract and retain qualified people in local government	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Lack of information for local officials to use in making decisions	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW

5

	To what extent is this a problem? (Please circle your opinion)				
ADULT EDUCATION					
1 Lack of adult education opportunities (e.g., night school classes, craft classes, etc.). .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 People can't afford to drive to where programs are available . .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 A lack of information about adult education opportunities.	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION					
1 Too much absentee ownership of land	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Inadequate control of soil erosion	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Inadequate methods for disposing of hazardous chemical wastes . .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Too much pressure on available hunting and fishing areas. . . .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
5 Too much farmland going to other uses	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
6 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES					
1 Lack of organized recreational programs for youth	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Lack of parks and playgrounds. . .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Lack of funds to maintain existing public recreational facilities .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES					
1 Inadequate opportunities to see music and theatrical productions	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
2 Inadequate opportunities for participation in music and theatrical performances	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
3 Inadequate access to public television and/or radio broadcasts .	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
4 Others? _____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW
_____	NOT	SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW

Q- 4 Please think a moment about the possible community problems mentioned on the previous pages. Are there any other problems that you feel are being experienced by communities in your local area that were not mentioned? If so, please list.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Q- 5 Now, please think a moment about the possibility of citizens, agency officials and faculty from our colleges and universities working together over a period of several months to understand and try to find solutions for problems facing our rural communities. What one problem do you feel is the most important one that you would like to see a group like this working on?

_____

Finally, we'd like to ask a few questions about yourself.

Q- 6 Where do you now live?

_____ COUNTY

_____ TOWN OR CITY IN OR NEAR WHERE YOU LIVE

Do you live:

☐ INSIDE CITY LIMITS

☐ OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS

HOW MANY MILES FROM CITY LIMITS _____ MILES

Q- 7 How many years have you lived in your present county of residence?

YEARS LIVED IN COUNTY

Q- 8 Have you ever been a public official (either elected or appointed) in this county?

☐ YES, AT PRESENT TIME

☐ YES, BUT NOT AT PRESENT TIME

☐ NO

Q- 9 Is your approximate age

☐ UNDER 35

☐ 36 to 55

☐ 56 OR OLDER

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the concerns now facing communities in your area of eastern Washington? If so, please use this space for that purpose.

Many thanks for your help!

APPENDIX C

WESTERN
SUB-REGION
EASTERN
SUB-REGION
Okanogan
Ferry
Pend
Oreille
Chelan
Stevens
Douglas
Lincoln
Spokane
Whitman
Grant
Adams
CENTRAL
SUB-REGION
Garfield
Columbia
Walla Walla
Asotin
SOUTHEASTERN
SUB-REGION